

General Information

GENERAL INFORMATION

GOVERNORS OF VIRGINIA

I. Virginia Under the London Company, 1606-1624

Edward Maria, Wingfield, President of the Council	May 14-September 10, 1607
John Ratcliffe, President of the Council.....	September 10, 1607-July 22, 1608
Matthew Scrivener, President of the Council.....	July 22-September 10, 1608
John Smith, President of the Council.....	September 10, 1608-September 1609
George Percy, President of the Council	September 1609-May 23, 1610
Thomas West, Baron De La Warr, Governor	1609-1618
“Held title until his death, June 7, 1618; represented for most of his term by deputies”:	
Sir Thomas Gates, Governor	May 23-June 10, 1610
Thomas West, Baron De La Warr, Governor in Virginia	June 10, 1610-March 28, 1611
George Percy, Deputy Governor	March 28-May 19, 1611
Sir Thomas Dale, Deputy Governor	May 19- August 16, 1611
Sir Thomas Gates, Lieutenant Governor	August 1611-March 1614
Sir Thomas Dale, Lieutenant Governor	March 1614-April 1616
George Yeardley, Deputy Governor	April 1616-May 15, 1617
Samuel Argall, Deputy	May 1617-April 1619
Sir George Yeardley, Governor	April 18, 1619-November 18, 1621
Sir Francis Wyatt, Governor	November 18, 1621-May 1624

II. Virginia Under the King, 1624-1652

Sir Francis Wyatt, Governor and Captain General	1624-1626
Sir George Yeardley, Governor and Captain General	1626-1627
Francis West, President of the Council and Acting Governor	1627-1629
John Pott, President of the Council and Acting Governor	1629-1630
Sir John Harvey, Governor and Captain General, resided in Virginia	1630-1635
John West, President of the Council and Acting Governor	1635-1637
Sir John Harvey, Governor and Captain General, resided in Virginia	1637-1639
Sir Francis Wyatt, Governor and Captain General	1639-1642
Sir William Berkley, Governor and Captain General	1642-1644
Richard Kemp (Kempe), President of the Council and Acting Governor	1644-1645
Sir William Berkley, Governor	1645-1652

III. Virginia Under the Commonwealth of England, 1652-1660

Richard Bennett, Governor, elected by the General Assembly	1652-1655
Edward Digges (Diggs), Governor, elected by the General Assembly	1655-1656
Samuel Matthews, Jr., Governor, elected by the General Assembly	1656-1660
Sir William Berkley, Governor, elected by the General Assembly	1660

IV. Virginia Again a Royal Province, 1660-1776

Sir William Berkeley, Governor	1660-1661
Francis Morrison (Moryson), Lieutenant Governor	1661-1662
Sir William Berkeley, Governor	1662-1677
Thomas Culpeper, Governor	1677-1683
Represented by duties during his absence for the following terms:	
Sir Herbert Jeffreys (Jeffries), Lieutenant Governor	1677-1678
Sir Henry Chicheley, Deputy Governor	1678-1680
Thomas Culpeper, Governor, resided in Virginia	May-August 1680
Sir Henry Chicheley, Deputy Governor	August 1680-December 1682
Thomas Culpeper, Governor	December 1682-May 1683
Nicholas Spencer, President of the Council	1683-1684
Francis Howard, Baron of Effingham, Governor resided in Virginia	1684-1689
Represented by the following individuals in his absence:	
Nathaniel Bacon, President of the Council	June-September 1684
.....	July-September 1687
.....	February 1689-June 1690
Colonel Francis Nicholson, Lieutenant Governor	June 1690-September 1692

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Sir Edmund Andros, Governor	1692-1698
Colonel Francis Nicholson, Governor	1698-1705
Represented by the following during brief absences:	
William Byrd, President of the Council	September-October 1700
	April-June 1703
	August-September 1704
Edward Knott, Governor	1705-1706
Edmund Jennings, President of the Council	1706-1708
Robert Hunter, Governor, captured by the French and never reached Virginia	1707-1709
Edmund Jennings, Lieutenant Governor and Deputy to Hunter	1708-1710
George Hamilton, Earl of Orkney, Governor	1710-1737
Never went to Virginia and was represented by the following:	
Alexander Spotswood, Lieutenant Governor	1710-1722
Hugh Drysdale, Lieutenant Governor	1722-1726
Robert Carter, President of the Council	1726-1727
Sir William Gooch, Lieutenant Governor	1727-1749
James Blair, President of the Council (acted during Gooches absence)	1740-1741
William Anne Keppel, Governor	1737-1754
Never went to Virginia and was represented by the following deputies:	
Thomas Lee, President of the Council	September 1749-November 1750
Lewis Burwell, President of the Council	November 1750-November 1751
Robert Dinwiddie, Lieutenant Governor	1751-1758
John Cambel, Earl of Loudoun, Governor	1756-1759
Never went to Virginia and was represented by the following deputies:	
John Blair, President of the Council	January-June 1758
Francis Fauquier, Lieutenant Governor	1758-1768
Sir Jeffrey Amherst, Governor	1759-1768
John Blair, President of the Council	March-October 1768
Norborne Berkeley, Governor	1768-1770
William Nelson, President of the Council	1770-1771
John Murray, Earl of Dunmore, Governor	1771-1775

V. *Virginia in Revolt – The Convention Period*

Peyton Randolph, President of the Virginia Convention of 1774, March 1775, and July 1775.
 Edmund Pendleton, President of the Virginia Convention of December 1775 and May 1776

VI. *Governors Under the Commonwealth 1776-1852 (chosen by the State Legislature)*

Patrick Henry, Governor	1776-1779
Thomas Jefferson, Governor	1779-1781
William Fleming, member of the Council of State acting as Governor	June 4-June 12, 1781
Thomas Nelson, Jr., Governor	June-November 1781
David Jameson, member of the Council of State acting as Governor	November 22-30, 1781
Benjamin Harrison, Governor	1781-1784
Patrick Henry, Governor	1784-1786
Edmund Randolph, Governor	1786-1788
Beverly Randolph, Governor	1788-1791
Henry Lee, Governor	1791-1794
Robert Brooke, Governor	1794-1796
James Wood, Governor	1796-1799
Hardin Gurnley, member of the Council of State acting as Governor	December 7-11, 1799
John Pendleton, member of the Council of State acting as Governor	December 11-19, 1799
James Monroe, Governor	1799-1802
John Page, Governor	1802-1805
William H. Cabell, Governor	1805-1808
John Tyler, Sr., Governor	1808-1811
George William Smith, member of the Council of State acting as Governor	January 15-19, 1811
James Monroe, Governor	January 19-April 3, 1811
George William Smith, member of the Council of State	
Acting as Governor	April 3-December 6, 1811
George William Smith, Governor	December 6-26, 1811

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Peyton Randolph, member of the Council of State	
Acting as Governor.....	December 27, 1811-January 4, 1812
James Barbour, Governor	1812-1814
Wilson Cary Nicholas, Governor	1814-1816
James P. Preston, Governor	1816-1819
Thomas Mann Randolph, Governor	1819-1822
James Pleasants, Governor.....	1822-1825
John Tyler, Jr., Governor	1825-1827
William B. Giles, Governor	1827-1830
John Floyd, Governor	1830-1834
Littleton Waller Tazewell, Governor	1834-1836
Wyndham Roberts, member of the Council of State	
Acting as Governor.....	March 1836-March 1837
David Campbell, Governor	1837-1840
Thomas Walker Gilmer, Governor	1840-1841
John Mercer Patton, member of the Council of State acting as Governor.....	March 20-31, 1841
John Rutherford, member of the Council of State	
Acting as Governor.....	March 1841-March 1842
John M. Gregory, member of the Council of State	
Acting as Governor.....	March 1842-January 1843
James McDowell, Governor	1843-1846
William Smith, Governor.....	1846-1849
John Buchanan Floyd, Governor	1849-1852

VII. *Governors Under the Commonwealth 1852-Present (Elected by Popular Vote)*

Joseph Jonson, Governor,	1852-1856
Henry Alexander Wise, Governor.....	1856-1860
John Letcher, Governor	1860-1864
William Smith, Governor.....	1864-1865
Francis Harrison Pierpoint, Provisional Governor	May 1865-April 1868
Henry H. Wells, Provisional Governor	April 1868-September 1869
Gilbert C. Walker, Provisional Governor.....	September 1869-December 1869
Gilbert C. Walker, Governor.....	1870-1874
James Lawson Kemper, Governor	1874-1878
Frederick W. M. Hilliday, Governor.....	1878-1882
William E. Cameron, Governor	1882-1886
Fitzhugh Lee, Governor.....	1886-1890
Philip W. McKenny, Governor	1890-1894
Charles T. O'Ferrall, Governor.....	1894-1898
James Hoge Tyler, Governor	1898-1902
Andrew Jackson Montague, Governor.....	1902-1906
Claude A. Swanson, Governor.....	1906-1910
William Hodges Mann, Governor.....	1910-1914
Henry Carter Stuart, Governor.....	1914-1918
Westmoreland Davis, Governor.....	1918-1922
E. Lee Trinkle, Governor	1922-1926
Harry F. Byrd, Governor.....	1926-1930
John Garland Pollard, Governor	1930-1934
James H. Price, Governor	1934-1938
George C. Peery, Governor.....	1938-1942
Colgate W. Darden, Jr., Governor.....	1942-1946
William M. Tuck, Governor	1946-1950
John Stewart Battle, Governor	1950-1954
Thomas B. Stanley, Governor.....	1954-1958
J. Lindsay Almond, Jr., Governor	1958-1962
Albertis S. Harrison, Jr., Governor	1962-1966
Mills E. Godwin, Jr., Governor.....	1966-1970
A. Linwood Holton, Governor	1970-1974
Mills E. Godwin, Jr., Governor.....	1974-1978
John N. Dalton, Governor.....	1978-1982
Charles S. Robb, Governor	1982-1986

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Gerald L. Baliles, Governor.....	1986-1990
Lawrence Douglas Wilder, Governor	1990-1994
George Allen, Governor.....	1994-1998
James S. Gilmore, III, Governor	1998-2002
Mark R. Warner, Governor	2002-2006
Timothy M. Kaine, Governor	2006-2010
Robert F. McDonnell, Governor	2010-2014

It is difficult to compile a clear and comprehensive list of governors for the colonial period because of the governmental and administrative changes made in England, and due to the proxy system whereby the person bearing the title of Governor often resided in England while a deputy resided in the colony. During the exploration or pre-colonization period, the territory that became Virginia was directly under the crown. Under the charter granted to the London Company, the early government of Virginia was a company appointed council and president, often spoken of as governor. The first man ever to have the title “governor” was Lord Delaware, appointed in 1609. When the London Company lost its charter in 1624, Virginia became a royal colony, and the governor was appointed by the crown. Those appointed to the position often resided in England and were represented in Virginia by deputies. During this period Virginia still remained a resident council and if the governor or deputy governor was absent from the colony the president of the council served as acting governor. There was a break in royal control after the Civil War in England when Parliament allowed the colony to be almost completely self governed. From 1652 to 1660 the General Assembly elected four Governors. Royal authority was restored in 1660, and from that date until the American Revolution in 1776 the Governors were appointed by the crown.

After the colony declared independence, a constitution was adopted which provided for the election of the governor by the General Assembly for a one-year term. A governor could be reelected to serve a total of three consecutive years. He could be reelected again only after a break in service. From 1776 to 1852 the governor was chosen by the state legislature. When the office became vacant by death or resignation, the senior member of the Council of the State acted as governor until the Assembly was able to choose a successor. The Constitution of 1851 abolished the Council of State and provided for the popular election of the Governor for a four-year term. With the exception of the Reconstruction period 1865-1869, when provisional governors were designated by federal authorities, the governor has been elected by popular vote since 1852.

Information on Virginia Governors was obtained from A Hornbook of Virginia History, third edition, Edited by Emily J. Salmon, 1983.

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SECRETARIES OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

Gabriel Archer, <i>Recorder</i>	1607-1609	James McDonald.....	1870-1879
William Strachey.....	1610-1611	Thomas T. Flournoy*.....	1880-1881
Ralph Hamor, Jr.....	1611-1614	William C. Elam.....	1882-1883
John Rolfe.....	1614-1619	Henry W. Flournoy.....	1884-1893
John Pory.....	1619-1621	Joseph T. Lawless.....	1894-1900
Christopher Davison.....	1621-1623	David Q. Eggleston.....	1901-1910
William Claiborne.....	1625-1635	B. O. Jones.....	1910-1926
Richard Kemp.....	1635-1649	Martin A. Hutchinson.....	1927-1929
Richard Lee.....	1649-1652	Peter H. Saunders.....	1930-1937
William Claiborne.....	1652-1660	Raymond L. Jackson.....	1938-1941
Thomas Ludwell.....	1661-1678	Ralph E. Wilkins.....	1942-1944
Philip Ludwell.....	1678	Thelma Y. Gordon, acting.....	1945-1946
Daniel Parke.....	1678-1679	Jesse W. Dillon.....	1946-1948
Nicholas Spencer.....	1679-1689	M. W. Armistead.....	1948
William Cole.....	1689-1692	Thelma Y. Gordon.....	1948-1952
Christopher Robinson.....	1692-1693	Martha Bell Conway.....	1952-1970
Ralph Wormeley.....	1693-1701	Cynthia Newman.....	1970-1974
Edmund Jennings.....	1702-1712	Patricia Perkinson.....	1974-1978
William Cocke.....	1712-1720	Stanford E. Parris.....	1978
Edmund Jennings.....	1720-1722	Frederick T. Gray, Jr.....	1978-1981
John Carter.....	1712-1743	Marilyn Lussen, acting.....	1981-1982
Thomas Nelson.....	1743-1788	Laurie Naismith.....	1982-1985
John Harvie.....	1788-1800	H. Benson Dendy, III.....	1985-1986
Daniel L. Hylton.....	1801-1811	Sandra D. Bowen.....	1986-1990
William Robertson.....	1811-1820	Pamela M. Womack.....	1990-1993
John Burfoot.....	1820-1821	Scott Bates.....	1993
William H. Richardson.....	1821-1852	Penelope Anderson, acting.....	1993-1994
George W. Munford.....	1853-1865	Betsy Davis Beamer.....	1994-1998
Charles H. Lewis.....	1865-1867	Anne P. Petera.....	1998-2002
John M. Herndon.....	1867-1869	Anita A. Rimler.....	2002-2006
Brevet Col. Garrick Mallery (<i>appointed under Special Orders No. 68, Hdqrs., First Military District</i>).....	1869-1870	Daniel G. LeBlanc.....	2006
		Katherine K. Hanley.....	2006-2010
		Janet V. Polarek.....	2010-2014

**From 1801-1830 this official was designated only as "Clerk of the Council of State" or "Clerk of the Privy Council"; later the phrase "Keeper of the Public Seal" was added.*

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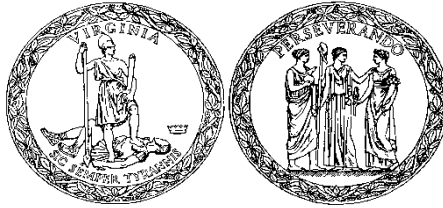
PRESENT GOVERNORS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Alabama	Robert Bentley (R)	Montgomery
Alaska	Sean Parnell (R)	Juneau
*American Samoa	Togiola Tulafono (D)	Pago Pago
Arizona	Jan Brewer (R)	Phoenix
Arkansas	Michael Dale Beebe (D)	Little Rock
California	Jerry Brown (D)	Sacramento
Colorado	John Hickenlooper (D)	Denver
Connecticut	Dan Malloy (R)	Hartford
Delaware	Jack Markell (D)	Dover
District of Columbia	Vincent Gray (D) - Mayor	
Florida	Rick Scott (R)	Tallahassee
Georgia	Nathan Deal (R)	Atlanta
*Guam	Eddie Calvo (R)	Agana
Hawaii	Neil Abercrombie (D)	Honolulu
Idaho	Clement Leroy Otter (R)	Boise
Illinois	Pat Quinn (D)	Springfield
Indiana	Mitchell Daniels (R)	Indianapolis
Iowa	Terry Branstad (R)	Des Moines
Kansas	Sam Brownback (R)	Topeka
Kentucky	Steven L. Beshear (D)	Frankfort
Louisiana	Bobby Jindal (R)	Baton Rouge
Maine	Paul LePage (R)	Augusta
Maryland	Martin J. O'Malley (D)	Annapolis
Massachusetts	Deval L. Patrick (D)	Boston
Michigan	Rick Snyder (R)	Lansing
Minnesota	Mark Dayton (D)	St. Paul
Mississippi	Haley Barbour (R)	Jackson
Missouri	Jay Nixon (D)	Jefferson City
Montana	Brian Schweitzer (D)	Helena
Nebraska	Dave Heineman (R)	Lincoln
Nevada	Brian Sandoval (R)	Carson City
New Hampshire	John Lynch (D)	Concord
New Jersey	Chris Christie (R)	Trenton
New Mexico	Susanna Martinez (R)	Santa Fe
New York	Andrew Cuomo (D)	Albany
North Carolina	Beverly Perdue (D)	Raleigh
North Dakota	Jack Dalrymple (R)	Bismarck
*Northern Mariana Island	Benigno Repeki Fitial (R)	Saipan
Ohio	John Kasich (R)	Columbus
Oklahoma	Mary Fallin (R)	Oklahoma City
Oregon	Jon Kitzhaber (D)	Salem
Pennsylvania	Tom Corbett (R)	Harrisburg
*Puerto Rico	Luis Fortuno (R)	San Juan
Rhode Island	Lincoln Chafee (I)	Providence
South Carolina	Nikki Haley (R)	Columbia
South Dakota	Dennis Daugaard (R)	Pierre
Tennessee	Bill Haslam (R)	Nashville
Texas	Rick Perry (R)	Austin
Utah	Gary Herbert (R)	Salt Lake City
Vermont	Peter Shumlin (D)	Montpelier
*Virgin Islands	John de Jongh (D)	St. Thomas
Virginia	Robert F. McDonnell (R)	Richmond
Washington	Christine Gregoire (D)	Olympia
West Virginia	Earl Ray Tomblin (D)	Charleston
Wisconsin	Scott Walker (R)	Madison
Wyoming	Matt Mead (R)	Cheyenne

*Territories governed by the United States of America
(R) Republican; (D) Democrat; (I) Independent

GENERAL INFORMATION

WHY VIRGINIA IS A COMMONWEALTH



There is no “State” of Virginia. Virginia was first known as a Commonwealth during the Interregnum (“between reigns”) while Oliver Cromwell was the Lord Protector of England. Under Cromwell’s leadership, the colony of Virginia enjoyed greater freedom in self-government than it had before. From 1660 until the end of the American Revolution in 1781, Virginia was considered a royal British colony along with the other twelve colonies established in North America before the English Civil War.

Virginia’s first constitution was passed on June 29, 1776. The constitution directed that “Commissions and grants shall run, in the Name of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and bear teste by the Governor with Seal of the Commonwealth annexed.” It also states “Government is, or ought to be, instituted for the common benefit, protection, and security of the people...” and “That all power is vested in and consequently derived from, the people...” These statements are the foundation and heart of the meaning of the “Commonwealth of Virginia.” The delegates at the Williamsburg convention decided to name their new form of government the Commonwealth of Virginia, probably in deference to the rebellion against the Crown and the relative freedom they had enjoyed as a colony over one hundred years before during the Interregnum.

In the Virginia Declaration of Rights, that was adopted on July 12, 1776, continued to put forth the founder’s views that government was a contract between the people who are “created equally free and independent?” The government expected the people to cede their personal sovereignty to create a society that would facilitate individual pursuits. Power would be vested in and derived from the citizens of Virginia.

Virginia’s founders envisioned Virginians possessing certain traits, namely, “a firm Adherence to Justice, Moderation, Temperance, Frugality and Virtue.” No concept was more central than public or civic virtue. The civically virtuous citizen was self-determinative and self-reliant while recognizing a duty of the general welfare, and the common good of the community at large.

As members of a Commonwealth, Virginians not only enjoy a higher degree of sovereignty, but a have direct participation in their own government. The continuing existence of the Commonwealth requires that each citizen be an active participate in the government. The Secretary of the Commonwealth fosters this inclusion by assisting the Governor in appointing Virginians from all walks of life and all corners of Virginia to serve on our many boards and commissions. This enables the public to have direct input to the policies and activities of each and every agency. Every Governor is bound to honor the Constitution by encouraging all citizens to actively and directly participate in Virginia’s government.

A state may or may not reflect the will of the people, but a commonwealth simply cannot exist without the people’s express consent. The commonwealth is an extraordinary form of government based on the collective genius of its citizens. The Commonwealth is distinguished from, and superior to, a mere state by the greatness of the good people of Virginia.

While Virginia was the first Commonwealth, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania became Commonwealths after the War of Independence. Kentucky, formerly part of Virginia kept the Commonwealth distinction when it was formed in 1792.

*This piece is a compilation of texts written by Thomas M. Moncure, Jr. of George Mason University and Louise A. Arnatt, Deputy Secretary of the Commonwealth of Virginia for Governor Mark Warner. Both texts were compiled by Anne Forsythe.